

MINUTES
City Neighborhood Council
Monday, July 30, 2001
6:30 p.m.

Voting Members: Stephen Lundgren (Ballard); Adrienne Bailey (Central); Russ Brubaker (Delridge Neighborhoods); Charlie Cuniff (Greater Duwamish); Chris Leman (Lake Union); Mike Warren (Queen Anne/Magnolia); Jim Simpkins (Northeast); Irene Wall (Northwest); Ron Burke (Southwest)

Absent: Downtown; East; North; Southeast

Other District Council/committee members: Joseph Smith (Citizens Implementation Review Panel); Doug Lorentzen (Neighborhood Matching Fund); Cheryl Klinker (North District and Pro Parks Levy Committee); Ann Owchar (Southwest)

Department of Neighborhoods staff: Karen Ko (substituting for Brent Crook); Randy Wiger (Neighborhood Leadership Program)

Other City Staff: Catherine Anstett (Parks Department)

A complete tape recording of this meeting is available to listen to — call Sandy Brooks at 684-0719.

1. Introductions/announcements/agenda/minutes

Charlie opened the meeting at approximately 6:35 calling for announcements. Chris Leman requested information on SeaTran's recommendations on Neighborhood Street Fund (NSF) requests. Charlie was not aware of the availability of that report. He explained that Anne Fiske-Zuniga could not be here today (she is listed as guest speaker on Agenda) but he understood that SeaTran had submitted budget recommendations to the Mayor, however, the fate of the NSF projects was not clear.

Charlie asked for review and approval of minutes from the June meeting. Stephen Lundgren noted that he was pleased with the level of detail and accuracy of the minutes and wished to thank and recognize Secretary Witmer for her work.

Leman moved for approval, Lundgren seconded, all voted in favor of motion to accept.

2. Guest Speakers

SeaTran staff Peter Lagerway, Pedestrian & Bike Program, and Loren Raynes, Signal Operations, distributed written materials on marked crosswalks at unsignalized intersections and Pedestrian Traffic Signals. These are the only two policies that are changing currently. These two Policy Docket items came up frequently in neighborhood plans.

The current crosswalk policy was distributed. They receive about 100 requests per year for marked crosswalks but only put in two-three per year. Marked crosswalks may not be the best pedestrian-safety solution — they do another 30 projects per year with other solutions (traffic circles, curb bulbs, etc.)

Up to now, there has been no formalized criteria in regards to when to do a marked crosswalk, partly because there has never been a really good national study on the effectiveness of this solution. In other countries (Netherlands, Denmark) it has been found that marked crosswalks actually increase accidents. A recent U.S. study seemed to confirm that finding. We then went through a few of the other alternatives to marked crosswalks that are included in the new policy.

Now that they have better policies, SeaTran has hired someone for the summer to do a review of current marked crosswalks for safety. A national version of Seattle's Streets That Work Manual will be out soon and includes 47 different methods for improving pedestrian safety.

They took questions and examples of some concerns from the attendees. They are asking for comments on the concrete stamping technique used in White Center as it is being evaluated now.

A document was distributed on the Pedestrian Signal Warrant Proposal, detailing changes in the current policy. They have already installed five pedestrian signals based on these revised criteria. By focusing on improving overall pedestrian safety, they are not as concerned with pedestrian volumes — and are looking at pedestrian generators.

One question was asked re: when District Councils rate NSF requests, should they be looking at the quality of the solution as per this criteria or simply prioritizing the problem and not looking at the money needed to solve? They prefer we come with problems and they will propose solutions.

3. CNC Budget Committee, Chair Report

Lundgren noted that Ballard District Council had prioritized \$96K of NSF projects including many traffic circles and expressed appreciation for SeaTran's work "detailing" the projects. However there is still confusion about eligibility between NSF and Cumulative Reserve Funds. Also noted that people are proposing larger (more costly) projects and CNC needs to explore enlarging the funding of the NSF program which are not appropriate for NMF projects. Still concerned that only SeaTran knows about expected projects budgets and allocation citywide. SeaTran analysis could influence District Council priorities but comes after the fact. Lundgren also noted that SeaTran now has a database of NSF projects and stewardship for projects from year to year should be the responsibility of each District, and not fall entirely to the individual proposing the project.

Stephen offered a resolution (copy attached) asking CNC to affirm and endorse a letter from the Ballard DC declaring that the Alaskan Way Viaduct and Magnolia Bridge be considered the top transportation spending priority for the City of Seattle. Russ Brubaker seconded motion.

Lively discussion ensued: C. Leman expressed concern that CNC should not vote on this because we lack knowledge of the proposed overall transportation budget and projects in order to determine the relative importance of any one project. He cited the ongoing priority for maintenance of streets including cobblestone streets.

Stephen felt Viaduct priority request was consistent with past CNC request to Executive and Council to increase funding for transportation major maintenance.

Russ Brubaker noted that the Alaskan Way corridor is key transportation facility for many neighborhoods and it's not misplaced to call it a top priority.

Doug Lorentzen agreed and added that the motion is consistent with recommendations from 1996 Citizens Advisory Committee on transportation funding calling for more focus on maintenance.

Adrienne Bailey asked which neighborhoods are impacted by Viaduct. Stephen responded that nearly every neighborhood is affected because of freight movement, parking, Port activities, and numerous secondary impacts if that corridor is interrupted.

Chris Leman requests that any letter from CNC state that arterial street maintenance is also a priority.

Mike Warren said that he supports the idea of more street maintenance but that should be a separate topic from the Viaduct. Russ agreed that Viaduct is a critical, one-of-a-kind issue.

Chris Leman offers motion to add codicil to Stephen's motion providing that CNC send a separate letter on other funding priorities for transportation. Motion dies for lack of a second.

Question is called for Lundgren's motion. Motion passes (unanimous.)

Chris Leman moves that CNC "authorize a letter advocating higher city funding for major maintenance of arterial and non-arterial streets." This letter is to be sent before September to increase chance of influencing budget process.

Jim Simkins questions if this is best way to make these decisions because there are too many unknowns. Suggests that this should come before CNC Budget Committee for discussion on details.

Doug Lorentzen raised issue that some non-arterial streets are LID-financed and should not become a burden on general taxpayers and asks that there be no specific reference to cobblestone streets in requests for more maintenance funding.

Vote: Motion to write a separate letter passes (7 yes; 1 No; 2 Abstain)

CIRP Report

Stephen introduced Joseph Smith, a CNC delegate to CIRP. Smith explained that CIRP did vote to remove one CNC delegate from CIRP for lack of attendance. His replacement will be Emily Wheeler. Goal is for new CIRP members to be in place for retreat October 1, 2001. Smith mentioned that there has been very little public comment at the monthly CIRP meetings in past three months and that Library Board delegates to CIRP tend to have better attendance at meetings. Stephen thanked Smith for this work on CIRP.

Pro Parks/Opportunity Fund

Catherine Anstett and Cheryl Klinker presented briefing on process whereby Pro Parks committee allocated the \$10 million opportunity fund for parks acquisition and development projects citywide. Several poster size graphics were presented to show the breakdown of uses for the fund. A map identifying parks levy projects by sector and an info sheet from the July 24 public meeting on opportunity fund criteria was made available. The Pro Parks Committee decided to have two cycles of funding at \$5 million rather than one large competitive cycle to accommodate project which will emerge later in the planning process. Then the \$5 million was further allocated at \$1 million for development projects and \$4 million for site acquisition.

A further breakdown of the \$4 million acquisition was \$1 million for citywide nominations and \$3 million for community parks based partly on a "gap analysis" for parks commissioned by Council member Nick Licata. Application of this criteria resulted in recommendation to split the \$3 million between three neighborhoods: University District, Denny Triangle, and Pioneer Square/Int'l District. These three target areas do not have any projects otherwise identified for Pro Parks funding.

Russ Brubaker mentioned that he is also a Pro Parks member and advised that there was conflict on the committee over this allocation approach but the reality is that \$10 million is not really much money compared to needs. He said that the City Council had imposed some vague restrictions which influenced how ProParks developed its funding criteria. He said Council should review final criteria to be sure they are "aboard." He reported that the second funding round (the remaining \$5 million) may have very different criteria. Brubaker say he and others were sympathetic to some of the arguments that these three areas were unable to identify parcels in advance for acquisition although many other neighborhoods did and thus had projects targeted for overall ProParks funding. He reported that Denny Triangle did not send a representative to ProParks to explain why in their neighborhood plan they did not identify parcels for acquisition.

Chris Leman also expressed concern that these allocations are quite different from other similar opportunity funds, which tends to generate competition from among many worthy projects.

Stephen Lundgren questioned why the City would reward three neighborhoods with \$3 million for not planning. He suggested that the gap analysis (which identified the three neighborhoods as being deficient in parks and open space) was unofficial, not part of the Seattle Comprehensive Plan, and flawed. Chris Leman concurred and noted that such features as the UW Campus and Arboretum certainly seem like open space within the U District neighborhood.

He said Pro Parks was aware of possible confusion because voters may have thought that all the Opportunity Fund would be available for citywide competition. Also debate over the threshold for projects at \$200K. Doug Lorentzen suggested dropping the threshold to \$100K. Stephen Lundgren recommended that criteria for funding should exclude any joint athletic field projects with the Seattle School District.

Catherine explained that ProParks Committee is considering an alternative that would let neighborhoods propose a slate of projects rather than a single site. Russ explained that often a site gets sold for development before it can be acquired for park/open space uses and the process should take that into consideration with more "slate of projects" flexibility.

Joseph Smith asked if the Pro Parks committee is able to represent the interest of underserved areas? Brubaker replied that the Committee is making effort not to act in a provincial way.

4. CNC Neighborhood Planning Committee, Chair Report

None as Chair Mike Thompson was not in attendance.

5. CNC Neighborhood Matching Fund Committee, Chair Report

Doug Lorentzen reports that the Committee is working on items previously identified in its work plan, including developing match criteria for projects in the street right-of-way (hard to get volunteers hours because of safety and liability issues); clarification of accounting of unexpended funds; and policies related to appropriate expenditures of funds for open space acquisition. The latter reflects comments from Council President Pageler about overspending for the "last postage stamp" of open space in some parts of Seattle. The Committee is also evaluating the question of making official policy concerning upper limit of \$100K on any single project.

Stephen Lundgren reported that the Ballard DC is working with Port of Seattle on potential chance of use for some Port properties, notably Shilshole and properties in BINMIC area. Reported that there is a group meeting regularly to discuss fate of Fisherman's Terminal, including maintenance, potential historic district or landmark designation, and Port proposals to allow moorage of pleasure craft there. Meetings are bi-weekly. Contact Stephen for details.

Chris Leman brought up issue that Fremont Bridge is also in bad shape and as significant to Ballard and Fremont as the Magnolia Bridge is to that area. **He moved to amend letter on Viaduct spending to include reference to Fremont Bridge. Anne Owchar seconded. Motion fails with 4 No; 1 Yes and 3 Abstain votes.**

6. Old Business/New Business

General Discussion

Russ Brubaker reports that they have received funding to do video history of High Point ad adjunct to redevelopment. Project will be multi media including video of interviews with people who have lived in/around High Point since WWII. Charlie Cuniff says there is a similar project in Duwamish to do video of history of that area.

Future of CNC

Chairman Cuniff reported that his educational pursuits would not enable him to continue as chair next year. A self-evaluation of his 18 months as chair lead him to ask for open discussion on the future of the CNC which he described as a philosophical renewal discussion to consider the effectiveness of the CNC and its structure. He asked if there was another way to take the group to another level of service to the city. He asked rhetorically if the CNC should remain bound to its three major committee roles, and asked if the CNC is really representing city neighborhoods. After 14 years, it may be necessary to make changes.

The intent is to have this discussion on the CNC agenda in September or October. Discussion ensued including comments by Russ Brubaker that his District has had similar discussions about its role and has rebelled against being put in a tight box by City definitions of District Council roles. Chris Leman agreed that reviewing the function is good but suggested that we not be too hasty. He suggested that the bylaws and resolution creating CNC are flexible and could provide for new initiatives.

7. Adjourn

Adjourned shortly before 9:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Irene Wall for Deborah Witmer, Secretary